



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Pacific West Region  
333 Bush Street  
Suite 500  
San Francisco, CA 94104-  
2828

[www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)

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## National Park Service News Release

For Immediate Release

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### Woody Smeck Selected as Superintendent of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks

SAN FRANCISCO – Woody Smeck has been selected as superintendent of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks in central California. Smeck has been acting in this position since April 2013 when previous superintendent Karen Taylor-Goodrich was selected as superintendent for the North Cascades National Park Service Complex in Washington state.

“Woody brings experience in managing complex and dynamic parks, ranging from an urban setting to wilderness,” said Pacific West Regional Director Chris Lehnertz. “He is a proven leader with a track record of building strong partnerships and community relations and I am delighted that he has accepted this position.”

Smeck served for more than a year as Deputy Superintendent of Yosemite National Park before his acting assignment at Sequoia and Kings Canyon. During this time, he served as chair of the Yosemite Sierra Executive Council, responsible for coordinating partnership activities between public land managers across a 10 million-acre landscape in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Prior to his posting at Yosemite, Smeck worked at Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area for 21 years, the last eleven of them as superintendent. During his tenure there he earned the respect of the local community and was also selected by the National Park Service as “Superintendent of the Year for Natural Resources Stewardship” in 2006.

“I am deeply honored to be selected for this opportunity,” said Smeck. “I grew up in Bakersfield and fell in love with our national parks while backpacking in Sequoia and Kings Canyon. On many levels, it feels like coming home to family and good friends. I look forward to working with the community and our partners in promoting the enjoyment and stewardship of the parks.”

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Smeck earned Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Landscape Architecture from California Polytechnic State University. He began his professional career with the National Park Service in July 1991 as a landscape architect and still maintains his license to practice landscape architecture in the state of California.

A native Californian, Smeck has been married for 23 years to his wife Karen. They have two daughters, Allison and Megan, who are currently attending college in California. Smeck enjoys hiking, running, fishing, and landscape pencil sketching. He especially enjoys spending time working on their cabin in the southern Sierra and trout fishing in the Tule River.

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, which lie side-by-side in the southern Sierra Nevada in central California, serve as a prime example of nature's size, beauty, and diversity. With the world's largest trees (by volume), grand mountains, rugged foothills, deep canyons, vast caverns, and the highest point in the lower 48 states, it is a place that attracts 1.6 million visitors a year from across the U.S. and the world. The alpine resources of Sequoia and Kings Canyon feature a stupendous collection of canyons and high peaks. On October 26, 1976, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks were designated Biosphere Reserves by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. UNESCO designated Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks as a Biosphere Reserve because they are the best example of "South Sierran oak woodlands, chaparral, mixed conifer forests, subalpine and alpine environments." To learn more, visit [www.nps.gov/seki](http://www.nps.gov/seki).

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About the National Park Service: More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 401 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

\*\*\*\*\*Editor's Note: If you would like to interview Woody Smeck, please call Dana Dierkes at (559) 565-3131.